

**United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Criminal Investigation Division  
Investigative Activity Report**

**Case Number**

1000-M646

**Case Title:**

Shell Puget Sound Refinery

**Reporting Office:**

Seattle, WA, Area Office

**Subject of Report:**

Contact with Laurie LaVander

**Activity Date:**

March 2, 2015

**Reporting Official and Date:**

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Special Agent

18-MAR-2015, Signed by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

**Approving Official and Date:**

(b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Assistant Special Agent in Charge

18-MAR-2015, Approved by (b) (6), (b) (7)(C)

Special Agent in Charge

**SYNOPSIS**

On March 2, 2015, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Special Agent (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), spoke with Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) Emergency Responder, Laurie LaVander, regarding odor complaint calls she received from citizens in the area of LaConner, Washington.

**DETAILS**

On March 2, 2015, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Special Agent (b) (6), (b) (7)(C), spoke with Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) Emergency Responder, Laurie LaVander, regarding odor complaint calls she received from citizens in the area of LaConner, Washington on February 20, 2015. LaVander advised that her role at Ecology was to take information coming into the call center as well as get information from the Shell Puget Sound Refinery in Anacortes to make a determination as to whether Ecology emergency personnel needed to respond.

LaVander stated that she was paged when two citizen complaints came into the National Response Center (NRC) hotline around 1700 PST. She advised that she spoke with (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) who reported a noxious air release that began around 1530 PST on February 20, 2015.

LaVander advise that she called Skagit County Emergency Management Division (EMD) and spoke (b) (6), (b) (7)(C). LaVander stated that EMD had been in contact with the Shell Puget Sound Refinery who reported an air scrubber failure at the refinery. Shell reported to the EMD that they were able to cap the scrubber and stop the release by 1730 PST.

LaVander stated that she attempted to call Shell and was directed to the information line on a couple of occasions. She advised that she eventually received a call back from Shell representatives (b) (6), (b) (7)(C). (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) jointly conferenced with LaVander and explained the situation. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) told LaVander that the refinery had taken a flare offline for maintenance. Shell employees were using steam to remove residual wastes inside the stack and believe that the odor was released from the flare stack as result of the steam cleaning. (b) (6), (b) (7)(C) admitted that there was an air release, but not liquid release from the refinery.

LaVander advised that because there was no liquid release, no personnel from Ecology responded. Matters involving air releases are referred to the local clean air authority. She advised that the local

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clean air authority was notified and took the lead in investigating.

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